

BOOK REVIEW

Journey Into Summer by Edwin Way Teale. Dodd, Mead & Company, N.Y., 366 pages, 53 photographic illustrations. Price \$5.95. Published October 1960.

The completion of a new book by Edwin Way Teale is always a notable event. It seems certain that the publication of his *Journey Into Summer* has been anticipated with unusual eagerness, for the appearance of the first two volumes in the "Seasons" series gave sure promise of more good things to come. There will be no disappointment on this score, although the Society may admit to a touch of jealousy that the ever-broadening interests of its best-known member have caused an ecdysis which has transformed him from an entomologist into a naturalist of unusual distinction. In point of fact, insects have a rather small part in *Journey Into Summer*, although when they appear they are treated in Mr. Teale's inimitable fashion. His description of the mayfly swarms around Kelleys Island will be recognized as letter-perfect by anyone who has witnessed the prodigious flights that occur in the Great Lakes region.

But mainly Mr. Teale has occupied himself with other things and the scope of his interest is astonishing. To his customary charming accounts of the doings of animals he has added equally attractive discussions of the zonation of plants, the mechanics of meteors, the characteristics of dust storms and the behavior of sand dunes. Mr. Teale's concern for accuracy is proverbial but his accurate presentation of facts is not enough to account for the popularity of his writings. Nor is it the admirable style in which these facts are presented. The world is full of able reporters whose work is both accurate and highly literate, but few of them are able to rouse in their readers a pleasant glow of response. This is Teale's great gift and he has used it well in *Journey Into Summer*. To read this book is a heart-warming experience, particularly so if one has travelled the roads which Teale took in his journey.

Teale's writings show his personality so clearly that it must have taken considerable courage on the part of Edward H. Dodd, Jr., to prepare the brief biographical sketch, *Of Nature, Time*

and Teale, which Dodd, Mead & Co. published last spring. For the ardent Teale enthusiast is apt to take the view that no one can explain Teale better than he has explained himself. Nevertheless, this slender volume of sixty-three pages contains many revealing touches. The section which deals with Mr. Teale's meticulous writing techniques is especially interesting. There are those who believe that when a gifted writer picks up a pen, felicitous phrases immediately flow from it. Such people will be shocked to learn of Teale's prolonged, systematic and arduous labors over his books. They may even conclude that their idol has feet of clay. The perceptive reader will take a sounder view. He will realize why Teale has reached the unique position that he occupies, for such a fortunate fusion of patience, pertinacity and literary acumen is rare indeed.—W.S.C.